

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 23-44 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, and also under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112:

Applicants have amended the rejected claims to replace the claim term “ranking” with “rating.” Beginning at least on page 14, line 13, the present patent application describes domestic, friendly, neutral and hostile relationships. These correspond to the table of Fig. 5 which illustrates a “ranked” list. Hence, the term “ranking” is fully supported and defined in the present patent application. Nonetheless, in response to the examiner’s semantic objection to the claims, applicants have substituted the term “rating” for “ranking.” Clearly, even a two level relationship, such as “hostile and neutral”, can be accurately described as a “ranking” or as a “rating”. Applicants have also substitute, where applicable, the term “better” for “higher”. Beginning at page 18, line 9, these various business relationships are again explained.

Applicants have also clarified certain ones of the claims in response to the examiner’s rejections, and have amended certain claims according to the examiner’s suggestions.

Claim 30 has been canceled because the limitations recited therein have been incorporated into claim 23. Claim 33 has also been canceled. Amendments have also been made to several claims to correct grammar.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103:

The prior art relied upon by the examiner, Reifel, teaches a method of selling cameras at a reduced cost to consumers in return for a promise to purchase a number of prints at a later date (Abstract). Reifel explains that the consumer can take advantage of a price break if the consumer purchases prints from certain providers. The consumer can also elect to have a “print order taker” select a “print house” for the lowest price, col. 5 lines 28-44. Apparently, this may be because the consumer doesn’t know which merchant is offering the lowest price. The consumer may also select a print house not listed by the camera maker.

None of these teachings of Reifel mention a database that stores relationship data between a number of storage device providers and a number of merchants,

wherein the database is accessed so that a user is presented with an order screen for ordering image products or services listing those merchants whom the database identifies as having better business relationships with the storage device provider. These distinctions are contained in the independent claims 23, 34, and 44.

Claim 23 also recites that the storage device contains a code that is read by an order terminal to identify the storage device provider so that its relationship rating with merchants can be accessed in the database. While Anderson teaches that cameras can store identifying codes, there is no mention in either reference of using that code to access a database of business relationships. Reifel already teaches that a camera provider lists "approved" print houses via a contract (col.5 lines 28-44), hence, the camera ID taught by Anderson adds nothing to Reifel's teaching because the camera provider is associated, via a contract, with a listing of print houses. The combination of Anderson and Reifel does not result in the presently claimed database of business relationships among multiple storage device providers and multiple merchants that is selectively screened for displaying multiple merchants' product information on an order terminal.


Because all the independent claims contain these limitations, and the remaining claims contain these limitations by dependency, all the presently pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record.

Applicant is not aware of any additional patents, publications, or other information not previously submitted to the Patent and Trademark Office which would be required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.99.

This Application is now believed to be in condition for favorable reconsideration and early allowance, and such actions are respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees in connection with this communication to Eastman Kodak Company, Deposit Account No. 05-0225.

Respectfully submitted,

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